

Border Eagle

Vol. 53, No. 34

Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas

August 26, 2005

Base clinic undergoes \$7.5M upgrade

By Airman 1st Class
Olufemi Owolabi
Editor

The movement, which began April 18, of the 47th Medical Group staff into the newly renovated \$7.5 million clinic is scheduled to conclude January 2006.

According to Col. Laura Torres-Reyes, 47th MDG commander, the multimillion-dollar renovation, which started April 2004, redesigned the clinical areas, like the patient-treatment area, organized offices better and eliminated several walls to facilitate customer interaction.

"Definitely, our customers will find the new facility more user friendly and a better environment to come into," Colonel Torres-Reyes said. "The staff will have more conducive areas for seeing patients."

The clinic is now redesigned from its previous set up--outdated inpatient unit--to an outpatient clinic.

In addition, 47th Medical Support Squadron commander, Lt. Col. Kevin



Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi

At the flight-medicine help desk, Staff Sgt. Cassie Bone, 47th Aero-medical-Dental Squadron shows Capt. Paul Miller the patient waiting area in the newly renovated clinic during an appointment sign-in training Wednesday. The clinic is currently undergoing a \$7.5 million renovation. The project, which began April 2004, is scheduled to conclude next year.

Pilloud said moving into the newly renovated clinic will make operations there more efficient and allow better and higher productivity for the outpatient clinic.

The clinic will receive new lighting and equipment, furniture and decor.

"There are also some light-safety upgrades, such as air-conditioning and fire-safety equipment upgrades. These are built in to meet new standards," Colonel Pilloud said.

See 'Base clinic,' page 4

BRAC panel begins final four-day deliberations

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- The Base Realignment and Closure Commission generally supported the Defense Department's recommendations Wednesday as the panel began its final four days of deliberations.

The panel met in Arlington, Va., to begin voting on DOD's proposal to reshape the military infrastructure and eliminate excess by closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others. Officials emphasized that the votes are not considered final until the commission finishes its deliberations Saturday.

After its final vote, the panel will send the final report to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president, if he concurs,

will send the final list to Congress, which can accept or reject it in its entirety, but not change it.

Today's session follows months of hearings around the country regarding DOD's plan that defense officials said will save about \$49 billion over the next 20 years.

Some BRAC commissioners have challenged the department's projected cost savings, as well as the military justification for some recommendations. The panel voted July 19 to add several military installations to a list being considered for closure during hearings in Washington. DOD had recommended one of those bases, Naval Air Station Brunswick, Maine, for realignment, but not closure.

Defense Secretary Donald

Rumsfeld defended DOD's BRAC recommendations during an Aug. 23 Pentagon news briefing and urged commissioners against going too far in changing them.

"I feel that we made very solid recommendations," the secretary said. "I suspect the commission, when all is said and done, will endorse the overwhelming majority of these recommendations."

Secretary Rumsfeld called the plan an opportunity to "reset our force" to make it more efficient and cost-effective. The recommendations "didn't come out of mid-air," he said, but followed two-and-a-half years of study and review that were free of political motivations. "There wasn't an ounce of politics in any aspect of it," he said.

Newslines

Chief of Staff

The Chief of Staff change-of-command ceremony will be aired live on Air Force Link and the Pentagon Channel Sept. 2 at 9 a.m. CST. Go to <http://www.af.mil> and click the button linked to the live feed.

Congratulations!

Maj. Todd Felton, 96th Flying Training Squadron, was selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel.

Retirement ceremony

A retirement ceremony for Lt. Col. Stephen Alsing, 47th Operations Group, is scheduled for 2 p.m. Sept. 2 in Anderson Hall. For details, call 298-4745.

Office closures

The 47th Security Forces Squadron Pass and ID office will close today at 3:30 p.m. for an official function. Call 298-5900.

Walk-in legal assistance is cancelled Tuesday and Thursday. Regular walk-in hours (Tuesdays 3 to 4 p.m. and Thursdays 8 to 9 a.m.) will resume Sept. 6. Call 298-5172 for details.

Deployment stats

Deployed:	62
Returning in 30 days:	31
Deploying in 30 days:	8

Mission capable rate (As of Tuesday)

T-1, 89.6%	T-6, 91.7%
T-38C, 75.7%	

Alcohol-related incidents

January to August 2004 13

Jan. 1 to August 23, 2005 18

Days since last incident 13

Deployed commander experiences 'American fighting spirit' firsthand



Commander's Corner

By Lt. Col. Brian Mullin
*47th Flying Training Wing
safety chief*

As I approach the end of my four-month tour in the deserts of Southwest Asia, I'm pleased to reflect on the spirit of America's fighting forces and particularly the air expeditionary world of the United States Air Force.

One aspect of the American fighting spirit that stands out for me is the sheer resilience reflected in Air Force individuals and units in the global struggle against violent extremism.

This trait presents itself over and over when adversity calls, as it often does, in this part of the world. Airmen, men and women serving the AEF rotations, display extraordinary resilience to every day occurrences in combat zones that are anything but everyday occurrences elsewhere.

Many of our AEF locations and operations endure incoming mortar rounds, hidden improvised explosive devices and attacks by suicide bombers, and yet the targeted Airmen consistently regroup, adjust their operations and carry on with their mission. This adaptability is an inherent trait of the pragmatic American spirit, born of our society's openness and freedom to strive for betterment. A shared resilience allows Airmen to forge through any adversity and overcome all obstacles to achieve their goals.

Resilience, the ability to adapt and overcome, represents a hidden reserve of resolve in every AEF individual and unit. I personally witnessed this amazing reserve emerge after tragedy struck our expeditionary wing in June.

We lost a valiant aviator and his specialized mission aircraft in

a crash upon return from an operational mission. The crash caused a shock to the whole wing and the predawn time of the accident presented increased uncertainty in the dark desert environment. There was, however, no time for introspection as the event presented an immediate need for answers while combat operations continued.

During the initial emergency response, and throughout the ensuing month-long safety and legal investigations, the Airmen of this air expeditionary wing performed miraculous feats of teamwork and efficiency in an environment with which most were wholly unfamiliar.

The accident site was a world away from the cloistered American presence on our host nation air base. It was an hour's rough drive into the middle of a vast and unforgiving desert--truly, the middle of nowhere.

The most striking aspect of the accident site was the explosion of base resources that materialized from nowhere. Air-conditioned tents, all-terrain vehicles, food services, security posts, computers and satellite communications, and teams of Airmen to run them all, popped up virtually overnight. Every unit on base seemed to have equipment or resources allocated to the crash site, most of which I had never seen before. More striking still was the explosion in personal efforts by every Airman involved at both the accident site and back at the base.

Our security forces alone, which are anything but fat on people, were required to secure the austere location for over a month on a 24-hour-a-day basis while continuing to guard the American presence on the host-nation air base.

Food services, medical, electrical production and communications forces were also split in two for the duration, causing distinct challenges for leaders and commanders in continuing the

The AEF teams of Airmen who do the frontline work of America's struggle against extremist violence have proven up to the task, yet again. Their resilience is a hallmark trait of the countrymen they serve and this resilience comes through every day in the missions they perform.

24-hour mission of the wing.

Typically, for Airmen anyway, these truly-extraordinary exploits were taken in stride. The accident site in the desert has now been restored to its original condition, and the final touchdown point of an American hero is trodden by only camels and scorpions once again. The memory of Airmen performing the impossible in the face of tragedy fades into the lore of AEF mythology.

Commanders at my location often cite the extraordinary feat that is the very essence of the U.S. Air Force air expeditionary force--the fact that nearly 100 percent of personnel at every AEF location are replaced by new troops three times per year. This Herculean task in logistics alone, while maintaining seamless operational efficiency, is virtually taken for granted after years of continued AEF rotational success. As I prepare to rotate back home, I savor the memory of miraculous feats of courage and teamwork I witnessed during my tour here.

The AEF teams of Airmen who do the frontline work of America's struggle against extremist violence have proven up to the task yet again. Their resilience is a hallmark trait of the countrymen they serve, and this resilience comes through every day in the missions they perform.

I salute all Airmen currently deployed and those Airmen left behind to do more at home in their absence.

Border Eagle

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The Border Eagle is published every Friday, except the first week in January and the last week in December, by the Del Rio News-Herald, a private firm in no way connected with the U. S. Air Force, under exclusive written contract with the 47th Flying Training Wing, Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.

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Editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 47th Flying Training Wing. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

Deadlines

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

Submissions can be e-mailed to: **olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil** or **sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil**.

Advertising

Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.

Actionline

Col. Tod Wolters
47th Flying Training
Wing commander



Call 298-5351 or email
actionline@laughlin.af.mil

One way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels is the Commander's Actionline.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

When calling or e-mailing the Actionline, please keep messages brief and remember to include your name and phone number so you are assured of a timely personal reply. Contact information is also useful when additional information is needed to pursue your inquiry.

We will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Below are some useful telephone numbers that may be helpful when working your issue with a base agency.

AAFES	298-3176
Finance	298-5204
Civil Engineer	298-5252
Civilian Personnel	298-5299
Clinic	298-6311
Commissary	298-5815
Dormitory manager	298-5213
EEO	298-5879
FWA hotline	298-4170
Housing	298-5904
Information line	298-5201
Legal	298-5172
MEO	298-5400
Military Personnel	298-5073
Public Affairs	298-5988
Security Forces	298-5900
Services	298-5810

“Through trust and teamwork, train expeditionary airpower experts to fight and win America’s wars.”

– 47th Flying
Training Wing
mission statement

Learning to deal with fudge factor

Lt. Col. Mark Murphy
354th Maintenance Squadron
commander

EIELSON AIR FORCE
BASE, Alaska--“Daddy, can I
have a box?”

It was a hot summer day near Chanute Air Force Base, Ill., and I was unpacking from the first of many permanent change of station moves in my career. I turned to answer my five year-old daughter who was looking up at me with big brown eyes.

“What do you need the box for?” I asked.

She replied, “Sherry and Terry’s kitty died, and we need a box to bury him in.”

My heart melted. What parent could resist such a touching moment? So I grabbed the nearest box and sent her on her way. Problem solved.

You can imagine my horror when, a few minutes later, I glanced out the window and saw my daughter, her two friends and the box out in the street. They were using sticks to try to pry something off the pavement.

Realizing I’d made an error by not asking a critical question, I ran outside to get the girls out of the street. My daughter quickly pointed out what was keenly obvious... they couldn’t get the cat in the box. I looked down at the biggest Siamese cat I’d ever seen, stuck to the hot Illinois asphalt like a chunk of firewood frozen to the ground in the middle of winter. The girls lovingly called this chunk of roadkill “Fudge.”

Since I grew up on a farm, I’ve got a pretty strong stomach. So I brushed away the flies, kicked Fudge loose, grabbed him by the tail and tossed him in the box with a thunk. The girls thanked me and headed back to Sherry and Terry’s house. Problem solved.

Or so I thought. No sooner

did I have my hands washed when the girls were back at the front door with the box. My daughter explained her friends’ dad wouldn’t let them bury Fudge in their backyard. Could they bury him in ours?

Suddenly what little cuteness that remained was gone. “Absolutely not!” I told her. “For one thing, I rent this house. For another, I’m not burying another man’s cat in my backyard.”

A little disappointed, the girls left again. Problem solved.

A few minutes later they were back asking for a shovel. “Sorry,” I told them, “I don’t have a shovel (which was true).” This was a relief because I assumed that if they were looking for a shovel the other dad had changed his mind about burying the cat in his yard. Problem solved.

It didn’t take long to find out I assumed wrong. I looked out the back window and found them in a vacant lot between two houses behind ours, sitting next to the box and scratching in the dirt with teaspoons. The afternoon drew on and, as you can expect, they made little progress.

Soon dinner time arrived and the girls all got called home to their respective families, abandoning what little interest they had in Fudge along the way.

After dinner, I looked out the back window. The rays of the setting sun shone on the box sitting in the middle of the vacant lot. I chuckled at the thought of some passerby getting curious and looking in the box. At least it wasn’t my cat.

Then my eye caught something I hadn’t noticed before -- little black marks on the box. I suddenly realized it wasn’t just an ordinary moving box. It was a box I’d used to mail things from Officer Training School.

There in the vacant lot behind my house was a cardboard box with a petrified cat inside and my name and address on the outside. At the end of the day, that cat didn’t belong to its owner, the person who hit it or even the girls who tried to bury it. That cat was mine, and suddenly the thought of someone finding it wasn’t so funny anymore.

A magic marker and a trip to a dumpster downtown solved the problem for good. But I’ve thought about that day throughout my career.

If only someone had told me that the dad down the street had no intention of burying that cat. If I’d only noticed my name and address on the box. If only I’d asked more questions.

How many times have you seen someone who made a series of decisions that all seemed perfectly reasonable and valid at the time, but yet things still went horribly wrong? I’ve seen it again and again in safety reports, hospital rooms, courtrooms and commanders’ offices. My experience with Fudge is not unusual. People often get lost in details and lose track of the big picture. Despite the best intentions, the damage is done before they fully realize what they’re dealing with.

When someone gets into a situation, it’s your responsibility to give them a crosscheck and get them to see the forest instead of the trees. It’s also important to watch yourself, look down the road, and focus on where you’re going, not just where you are.

Faced with a challenging situation, it’s human nature to get tunnel vision and be blindsided by something you didn’t anticipate.

Watch for this in yourself, and watch for it in your people, because, trust me, you don’t want to be stuck with the cat at the end of the day.

Base clinic, from page 1

Also, he said privacy is an added value to the new design. “The windows are designed so that when customers come up to the counter or check in, nobody else will be able to hear them,” he said. “The clinic is now designed to meet our demands and requirements.”

Furthermore, Col. Torres-Reyes said, “Since privacy and safety features are significant issues, now we’ve been able to incorporate those into critical parts of the clinic facility.”

The colonel said despite the changes, the clinic does not offer any additional services; this renovation simply furthers the transformation from hospital to outpatient clinic. “It (the renovation) does not change what we are; the facility is still a clinic,” she said. “We don’t have any emergency room, and there are no plans to become a hospital.”

For emergencies, members are reminded to call 9-1-1.

Colonel Torres-Reyes thanked Laughlin members for their patience and understanding as the clinic undergoes the phasing. “We are here to meet the demands of our Tricare beneficiaries,” she said. “It’s all about them. The customer-satisfaction aspect is really huge for us. We want to make sure their 47th Medical Group and clinical experiences are as friendly and pleasant as possible.”

She also urges customers to continue providing feedback so the medical group will be able to improve customer service.

New Texas hunting, fishing licenses on sale now

AUSTIN -- New hunting and fishing licenses for 2005-2006 are available now, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is reminding customers to be aware of some significant changes. All current annual hunting and fishing licenses expire Wednesday, and licenses take effect Thursday.

New this year, TPWD is waiving all fees for hunting and fishing licenses for Texas residents currently on active military duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, including members of the Reserves or National Guard on active duty.

A Texas resident is defined as a person who has resided continuously in the state for more than six months prior to applying for a license. Active-duty military personnel must show a current military identification card and proof of Texas residency.

The free military license may be obtained at any license vendor location, but not by phone or on the Internet. Active duty military personnel will get a “Super Combo” Hunting and All-Water Fishing Package (Type 510), which includes all five state stamp endorsements (archery, freshwater fishing, and migratory game bird, saltwater fishing with a red drum tag and upland game bird). The Federal Waterfowl (duck) Stamp is not included.

Two significant changes in special

stamp endorsements passed during the last legislative session will affect game bird hunters this year. Rather than individual stamps for various game bird species, TPWD has consolidated the special endorsements into two categories: upland and migratory.

The white-winged dove stamp and waterfowl stamp are now combined into a single Migratory Game Bird Stamp (\$7), which will be required to hunt all migratory game birds, including ducks, geese, white-winged doves, mourning doves, white-tipped doves, sandhill cranes, woodcock, snipe, rails, coots and gallinules.

The turkey stamp has been replaced by the Upland Game Bird Stamp (\$7), which will be required to hunt all non-migratory game birds, including turkey, quail, pheasant, chachalaca and lesser prairie chicken.

Anyone who purchases the Super Combo license package automatically gets these needed stamps.

In addition to the migratory-stamp endorsement, Harvest Information Program (HIP) certification is required of all migratory-game bird hunters. HIP certification will be printed on the license at the time of sale only after the purchaser answers a few brief migratory-bird questions.

Lifetime license holders must also be HIP-certified to hunt migratory birds and these new stamp changes are automatically included in all lifetime

licenses.

A sizable share of game bird hunters-- those who hunt mourning dove exclusively and quail hunters--will be buying stamps for the first time. License sales data show that about 60 percent of all dove hunters already purchase the white-winged dove stamp.

TPWD also estimates that only about 40 percent of quail hunters would feel an impact from the new Upland Game Bird Stamp, since most quail hunters already buy combination type licenses that include all needed stamps. The department estimates that the two new stamps will generate up to \$1.5 million per year in new revenue for conservation work.

Texas issues 3.2 million hunting and fishing licenses annually through 28 TPWD field offices, more than 100 state parks and at many retailers across Texas.

Hunters and anglers can also purchase licenses by calling (800) 895-4248. The phone license operation serves both Texans and non-residents, enabling hunters and anglers to buy licenses by phone using a major credit card. Call center hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday.

Map booklet and supplement can also be obtained immediately by purchasing the permit at a TPWD law enforcement office.

The summer 2005 issue of Airman is now available on line.
Log onto <http://www.af.mil/news/airman/>
for your quarterly desktop edition.

3X3

2X2

1X2

1X2

BRAC decisions needed to continue transformation

By 1st Lt Tim Dougherty
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON -- The Air Force chief of staff told the Base Realignment and Closure Commission on Aug. 20 that while many of the decisions related to base closure are “gut wrenching,” the changes are needed to allow the Air Force to continue to transform to meet the war-fighting demands of the 21st century.

“The decision to close many of these bases is very personal to me,” Gen. John P. Jumper said. “Many of us will feel the impact of these decisions. I lived at many of these bases as a kid while my dad was coming up through the ranks. However, this is the time for tough and bold decisions. It’s an opportunity that we must seize to allow us to continue to be able to respond to emerging missions around the world today.”

The Air Force has experienced BRAC rounds in the past, with the most recent occurring in 1995 after the Air Force shrunk by 200,000 Airmen. However, the general said, there are major differences between the Air Force’s current recommendations and those from past rounds

“In 1995, the BRAC rounds were a consequence of decisions that had already been made relative to troop strength,”

the general said. “The recommendations today are proactive. This round doesn’t only accommodate planned reductions. Instead, it allows us to reset our force, anticipate challenges and establish organizations we need for the future.”

General Jumper said the recommendations are both strategy and capability based, and they support the intent of the BRAC panel, which is to divest the Air Force of infrastructure it no longer needs, while improving the effectiveness and military value of retained assets.

“We know we’ll be a smaller force; however, we’ll be a more lethal force thanks to advancements in technology,” the general explained. “We know where and when and how we station our forces must change in order to enable the transformation required by the new security environment.”

The general also said the BRAC recommendations were made with a single, total force--active, Guard and Reserve--in mind and not just as a combination of individual components or representatives.

“The Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve are integral parts of the Air Force,” General Jumper said. “Main-

taining an optimal mix of manpower and missions among components is key to their continued relevance and critical to their contribution to the finest Air Force in the world.”

Saying “we know what to do and we need to act,” the general stressed to the panel that this round of BRAC proceedings is the most significant opportunity to take critical steps in the transformation process in his 39 years of service.

Change is not easy and we know that,” he said. “But we need to have the courage to take the steps we think need to be taken. It is my conviction that the Air Force recommendations taken together with the other service’s recommendations are the right thing to do for the nation.”

The hearings were the last formal opportunity for representatives from the Department of Defense to provide testimony before the panel sends a final version of the recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

The president can either reject the list or accept it without modifications.

If he accepts the list, it is submitted to Congress, which can similarly accept or reject it.

3X8

2X4

DOD officials announce one-year enrollment for SBP

WASHINGTON -- Department of Defense officials announced Aug. 19 that military retirees, who opted out of some or all their Survivor Benefit Plan coverage, will have another opportunity to elect coverage during a one-year open enrollment period beginning Oct. 1 and running through Sept. 30, 2006.

Upon a retiree's death, the plan provides an annuity of up to 55 percent of the military retired pay. Until recently, the annuity for a surviving spouse age 62 or older was reduced to 35 percent to reflect the availability of Social Security benefits. This reduction will phase out by April 2008, and the full 55-percent benefit will be paid regardless of the spouse's age in accordance with the fiscal 2005 National Defense Authorization Act.

Current nonparticipants will be able to elect any coverage they could

have elected previously upon retiring from active service or upon receiving notification of eligibility for Reserve retired pay at age 60.

If they have a reduced election, they may increase their coverage. A participant with child-only coverage may add a spouse or former spouse to their coverage, and a person may add child coverage to spouse or former spouse coverage.

But those who took coverage and later elected to terminate that coverage are not eligible to make an open enrollment election.

Open enrollment elections require a lump sum buy-in premium as well as future monthly premiums. The lump sum equates to all back premiums, plus interest, from the date of original eligibility to make an election plus any amount needed to protect the Military Retirement Fund.

The latter amount applies almost exclusively to those paying fewer than seven years of back payments.

The lump sum buy-in premium can be paid over a two-year period. Monthly premiums for spouse or former spouse coverage will be 6.5 percent of the coverage elected, the same premium paid by those currently enrolled. Reserve component members under age 60 and not yet eligible for retired pay do not pay back premiums or interest, but must pay a monthly plan premium "add-on" once their retired pay starts.

Elections are effective the first day of the month after the election is received, but no earlier than Oct. 1. An election is void if the retiree dies in the two years following an election and all premiums are refunded to the designated survivor.

To make an open enrollment elec-

tion, a retiree can complete and submit a DD Form 2656-9, "Survivor Benefit Plan and Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan Open Enrollment Election." The form is available electronically at www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2656-9.pdf

For assistance with the form, people can contact the retiree activities office.

Retirees can mail the completed form to the address specified on the form. Applicants will be formally notified of their cost and have 30 days from the date of the notice to cancel the election by notifying the Defense Finance and Accounting Service or the reserve component, as applicable, in writing.

(Courtesy Air Force
Print News)

Thunderbirds' season continues after mishap

NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE, Nev.-- The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds are continuing their show schedule after reviewing their procedures following a mishap Aug. 20 at the Chicago Air and Water Show when two aircraft touched in flight.

During one of the maneuvers, two of the team's F-16 Fighting Falcons touched wingtips. The show was halted following the incident. Both aircraft landed safely.

"Safety is paramount in everything we do," said Lt. Col. Mike Chandler, team commander. "After our incident Saturday we reviewed our procedures and will continue the season this weekend in Westfield, Mass."

The Thunderbirds will continue their weekly prac-

tices Tuesday over the ranges near Creech Air Force Base, Nev. Following the practices the team will deploy on a two-week trip Thursday to perform at shows in Westfield, Mass; Atlantic City, N.J., and Cleveland.

"Every maneuver we do during our demonstration is designed and executed with safety as our first priority," Colonel Chandler said. "After taking a deeper look at our flying procedures, I have the utmost confidence in our safety for the crowd, our pilots and planes. Since we're satisfied with our procedures, we'll continue our season."

(Courtesy Air Force
Print News Service)

Force shaping Phase II evolves for officers in 2006

By Master Sgt.
Mitch Gettle
Air Force Print News

The Air Force's officer corps is overmanned by about 4,000 Airmen.

In fiscal 2005, the Air Force's voluntary force shaping initiatives successfully reduced the size of the active duty population to its congressionally authorized level of 359,000.

However, the fiscal 2006 budget trims the Air Force down to 357,400 Airmen. The new population target shows the Air Force will have an overage of officers.

"The Air Force is still experiencing a surplus in officers, particularly in the junior grades," said Brig. Gen. Glenn F. Spears, Air Force director of force man-

agement policy. "We will continue our force shaping efforts until the proper balance and skill mixture is achieved."

The general said that if the situation were left unresolved, these additional officers would constrain the service's readiness and operational effectiveness.

Air Force officials recently announced the next force shaping Phase II evolution to address the officer surplus, waiving recoupment of unearned portions of some bonuses and education costs.

"Some of the Air Force programs where recoupment is not pursued include transfers to the Guard or Reserve via Palace Chase, Limited Active Duty Service Commitment waivers, ROTC cadet disenrollment and

interservice transfers to the Army via Blue-to-Green," the general said.

Eligibility criteria differs among the programs and interested officers are encouraged to consult information presented at the Air Force Personnel Center Force Shaping Web site at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retsep/shape2.htm or their local military personnel flight.

"By further expanding the voluntary force shaping opportunities, the Air Force will continue to shape the force for future operational challenges," General Spears said. "These recoupment-related initiatives offer additional means for those officers who were considering leaving active duty, but did not want to owe the government."

AFPC notifies Airmen of criminal activity exposing personal info

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, -- The Air Force is notifying more than 33,000 Airmen that a security breach has occurred in the online Assignment Management System.

The notification comes after Air Force Personnel Center officials here alerted Air Force and federal investigators to unusually high activity on a single user's AMS account in June.

AMS, an online program used for assignment preferences and career management, contains career information on officers and enlisted members as well as some personal information like birth dates and social security numbers, according to Col. Lee Hall, director of assignments at AFPC. It does not contain personal addresses,

phone numbers or specific dependent information.

A malicious user accessed approximately half of the officer force's individual information while only a handful of noncommissioned officers were affected, according to Lt. Col. John Clarke, AFPC's deputy director of Personnel Data Systems. The individual used a legitimate user's login information to access and/or download individuals' personal information.

"We notified Airmen as quickly as we could while still following criminal-investigation procedures with the OSI," said Maj. Gen. Tony Przybylski, AFPC commander. "Protecting Airmen's personal information is something we take very seriously and

we are doing everything we can to catch and prosecute those responsible under the law.

"We notified the individuals involved outlining what happened and how they can best insulate themselves from this potential risk," the general added. "We've taken steps to increase our system security. We're working with all Air Force agencies to identify vulnerabilities. We must keep our data protected."

In the meantime, officials say officers may login to the virtual Military Personnel Flight at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/vs/> to see if their information was viewed. If it was, they will receive a pop-up banner after login which will provide ad-

ditional information. The small number of enlisted members who have had their information viewed will be contacted directly.

Officials also said Airmen may decide to follow Federal Trade Commission guidelines for dealing with identity theft at <http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/index.html>.

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, beginning Sept. 1, 2005, everyone is entitled to one free credit check annually, to request this free report visit <http://www.annualcreditreport.com>.

Any Airman who believes he or she has become a victim of identity theft, should contact the base OSI and legal office.

New flag-folding script focuses on history, Air Force significance

By Staff Sgt. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Air Force leaders recently approved a new script that can be read during flag-folding ceremonies.

Though there are no official ceremonies in the Air Force that require a script to be read when a flag is folded, unofficial ceremonies such as retirements often do, said Lt. Col. Samuel Hudspath, Air Force protocol chief.

"We have had a tradition within the Air Force of individuals requesting that a flag be folded, with words, at their retirement ceremony," he said. "This new script was prepared by Air Force services to provide Air Force recognized words to be used at those times."

There is no shortage of scripts available that can be read aloud during a flag folding, but many of those scripts are religious in nature and also ascribe meaning to the individual folds put into the

flag. One of the oldest of those scripts is attributed to an anonymous chaplain at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Individuals who hear those scripts end up attributing the contents of the script to the U.S. Air Force. But the reality is that neither Congress, nor federal laws related to the flag, assign any special meaning to the individual folds. Colonel Hudspath said that was the primary motive for creating a new flag-folding script.

"Our intent was to move away from giving meaning, or appearing to give meaning, to the folds of the flag and to just speak to the importance of the flag in U.S. Air Force history," he said.

The new script, approved in July, focuses on flag history and the significance of the flag within the Air Force: "Today, our flag flies on constellations of Air Force satellites that circle our globe, and on the fin flash of our aircraft in harms way in every corner of the world. Indeed, it flies

in the heart of every Airman who serves our great nation. The sun never sets on our Air Force, nor on the flag we so proudly cherish," the new script reads.

The new script is available at base protocol offices for use by anybody who wants to lend significance to a flag folding, Colonel Hudspath said. The script will not be used at retreats or funerals, as those are silent ceremonies.

"These ceremonies are meaningful to individuals, especially at their retirement," he said. "We wanted to offer a script, containing factual information, that shows respect for the flag and expresses our gratitude for those individuals who protect our country, both at home and abroad."

By October, officials said the Air Force will make a video available to protocol offices and honor guard units that demonstrates a flag-folding ceremony using the new script.



Photo by Master Sgt. Val Gempis

To the rescue...

KADENA AIR BASE, Japan -- Senior Airman Sean Cole (foreground) and Tech. Sgt. Keith Hartman provide assistance to Tech. Sgt. Handel Stewart during a situational medical exercise here. During training, pararescuemen "treated" wounded "Soldiers" ambushed by enemy forces. The exercise is designed to test combat medical skills of the rescuers. The Airmen are assigned to the 31st Rescue Squadron.

B-17 to fly over state capitol for WWII commemorative event

AUSTIN--One of the most famous airplanes ever built, the B-17 Flying Fortress, will fly over the state capitol on Sept. 2, highlighting a special event marking the 60th anniversary of the official end of World War II.

The free event, hosted by the Texas Historical Commission (THC), begins at 9 a.m. on the south lawn of the State

Capitol and features a keynote address by Gov. Rick Perry. World War II-era music performed by the 323rd United States Army Medical Command Band from Fort Sam Houston begins at 8:30 a.m., prior to the event.

The B-17 Flying Fortress is best known for its long, daylight bombing raids over Europe. With up to 13 machine

guns attached, the B-17 was considered a "flying fortress in the sky." The B-17 used in this event is one of only nine still flying in the world and comes from the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston. Other World War II-era aircraft participating in the Sept. 2 flyover are from the Centex Wing of the Texas Commemorative Air Force in San Marcos.

World War II veteran speakers will include Loel Dene (L.D.) Cox, Deanie Parrish and Matthew Honer Clay. Cox is a survivor of the USS Indianapolis, torpedoed by a Japanese submarine in what is considered the worst naval disaster in U.S. history. He was 19 years old when the ship sank after delivering the atomic bomb to the island of Tinian that would be dropped on Hiroshima.

Deanie Parrish earned her silver wings at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas and served as one of the elite Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP), the first women in history to fly America's military aircraft.

Clay was drafted before

he could receive his high school diploma, after being ranked first in his 1943 class in Beaumont, Texas. Clay served in the Pacific Theater as a technical sergeant earning several medals, including three Bronze Stars.

In addition, the THC will launch its new brochure Texas in World War II, featuring historic sites and individuals who figured prominently in the state's contribution to the war effort. Nearly one million men and women served at Texas military installations from 1941 through 1945 and more than 750,000 Texans were in uniform. Seventy-two counties hosted major military bases.

The event marks the beginning of a three-year Texas in World War II initiative by the THC, in association with Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Texas Veterans Land Board, the Texas Veterans Commission, the Texas State Historical Association and Preservation Texas. The project will cost approximately \$800,000 over three years, with one quarter of the funding commit-

ted by the THC. Remaining funds will come from private sector partnerships including the Cain Foundation, Dian Graves Owen Foundation, Dodge Jones Foundation, Hoblitzelle Foundation, Houston Endowment, Pineywoods Foundation, Chevron and the Tejon Exploration Company.

A color guard unit from the University of Texas at Austin Reserve Officers Training Corps will perform. Veterans needing special assistance for seating should be dropped off at 12th and Brazos streets. In case of inclement weather, the event will be held at 9 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church sanctuary at 1201 Lavaca St.

The Texas Historical Commission is the state agency for historic preservation. The Agency administers a variety of programs to preserve the archeological, historical and cultural resources of Texas.

(Information courtesy of a Texas Historical Commission news release)



U.S. Air Force photo

1940s--These four female pilots leaving their ship at the four engine school at Lockbourne are members of a group of WASPS who have been trained to ferry the B-17 Flying Fortresses.

AEDC wraps up wind-tunnel testing on Joint Strike Fighter

By Janaé Daniels
Arnold Engineering
Development Center
public affairs

ARNOLD AIR FORCE BASE, Tenn.--The Arnold Engineering Development Center recently finished a testing series on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter weapons-store separation in the center's 4-foot transonic wind tunnel, or 4T.

Most of the JSF weapons- separation tests have been conducted in the center's 4T due to its unique capabilities and AEDC personnel's expertise of obtaining data of store separations.

The store-separation tests focused primarily on munitions release from the aircraft's internal weapons bay as well as external pylons and also include testing of the external fuel tanks. The testing evaluates how a weapon, fuel tank or other object will separate from an air-

craft while in flight at different air speeds and angles.

Marc Skelley, senior project manager for the Flight Systems Test Division, said the most recent test was successful without any major surprises.

"There were a few bumps in the road, like normal, but everyone did a great job and the customer met all of their test objectives."

Another series of wind tunnel tests are scheduled to start in September in the center's 16-foot transonic wind tunnel. These tests include air data, inlet performance, jet effects, pressure loads and stability and control testing. With the conclusion of the next series of tests early next year, AEDC will have provided more than 7,500 user-occupancy hours toward the system design and development phase of the JSF program since the first test in 2002 in the center's wind tunnels. This will have resulted in more than

\$50 million worth of aerodynamic testing to the center during that time frame.

AEDC is also testing all the variants of the Pratt & Whitney F135 jet



Courtesy photo

engine for the JSF in a multi-year test program worth about \$200 million.

After the next round of tests are over at AEDC, Lockheed Martin will move into the first critical design review for the program in February 2006 and will begin production of the flight test aircraft. First flight for the JSF is currently scheduled for August 2006.

NEWPORT, N.Y.-- A full-scale F-35 Joint Strike Fighter model is shown perched atop a pedestal overlooking a rural valley in central New York. Engineers from the Air Force Research Laboratory's antenna research and measurement facility tested the aircraft's sophisticated antenna. The model weighs 8,500 pounds and has the capability to simulate all three variants of the fighter.

Purple Hearts awarded to Air Force civil engineers

By Dewey Mitchell
59th Medical Wing
public affairs

LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE--It ranks as one of the most dangerous jobs in the Air Force during peacetime, but even more so during a war: explosive ordnance disposal, or EOD.

Maj. Matthew Conlan and Staff Sgt. Christopher Ramakka were on an EOD mission June 17 to clear an old Soviet munitions area about 20 kilometers north of Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, when a landmine exploded under the feet of Sergeant Ramakka. Major Conlan was only a few feet behind him.

Both received major blast injuries and were awarded the Purple Heart medal Aug. 12 by the Air Force's top civil engineer, Maj. Gen. Dean Fox, as colleagues, friends and families watched.

Major Conlan, commander of the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron at Bagram AB, was leading a group of seven civil engineers that included four EOD professionals. They were accompanied by military police and civil engineers from the Army.

The site, occupied by a small Afghan National Army unit, had a number of bunkers filled with munitions. Scat-

tered around the area were old unexpended ordnance items such as mortar rounds and munitions dispensers.

"We began clearance operations of the scattered items, securing those large enough to fashion into improvised explosive devices," said Major Conlan.

The EOD team leader noted that farther down the mountain was a marked landmine area, but they were well outside the marked area.

"Sergeant Ramakka had knelt down to check an old artillery round to see if it was live," said Major Conlan. "After he determined that it was not live, he picked up an old RPG booster that he had found earlier, stood and took one step toward another row of artillery entrenchments. That's when the landmine detonated."

The explosion amputated Sergeant Ramakka's left foot, and he had severe blast injuries to his right leg and hands. The blast severely injured

both of Major Conlan's legs, and he received moderate blast injuries to his hands and face.

They were transported by air-evac helicopters to the 249th Field Hospital at Bagram AB. Two days later they were transported to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany.

Four days after the incident, June 21, Sergeant Ramakka arrived at Wilford Hall Medical Center here. Major Conlan came to Wilford Hall two days after Sergeant Ramakka had arrived. They had received continuous medical treatment since immediately after the blast.

Sergeant Ramakka was discharged from Wilford Hall on July 6 and is currently an outpatient at Brooke Army Medical Center. Major Conlan was discharged from Wilford Hall July 11 and is currently an outpatient of Wilford Hall. Both are assigned to the Patient Squadron at Wilford Hall.



Photo by Armondo Flores

Staff Sgt. Christopher Ramakka (middle) and Maj. Matthew Conlan are applauded by Maj. Gen. Dean Fox, Air Force Civil Engineer (far left) during their Purple Heart award ceremony at Lackland Air Force Base Aug. 12.

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Chiropractic clinic

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Military Media

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XLER

Tech. Sgt. LaShinya Crivens
47th Mission Support Squadron

Hometown: St. George, S.C.
Family: Husband, Ri'Chard and son, Ri'Shan

Time at Laughlin: 2 years and 11 months

Time in service: 15 years and 8 months

Greatest accomplishments: Finally getting my Community Colleg of the Air Force degree

Hobbies: Reading novels

Bad habit: Heavily procrastinating

Favorite movies: "Five Heartbeats," "What's Love Got to do With It," "The Temptations"

If you could spend one hour with any person, who would

it be and why? My grandmother, Jessie. She was my confidant, my source of inspiration, and friend. Her unconditional love for me got me through many obstacles. I truly miss her!

"Tech. Sergeant Lashinya Crivens is an outstanding NCO who expertly manages the highest ops-tempo section in the military personnel flight, all with a smile on her face."

—1st Lt. Terri Jones,
47th Mission Support Squadron

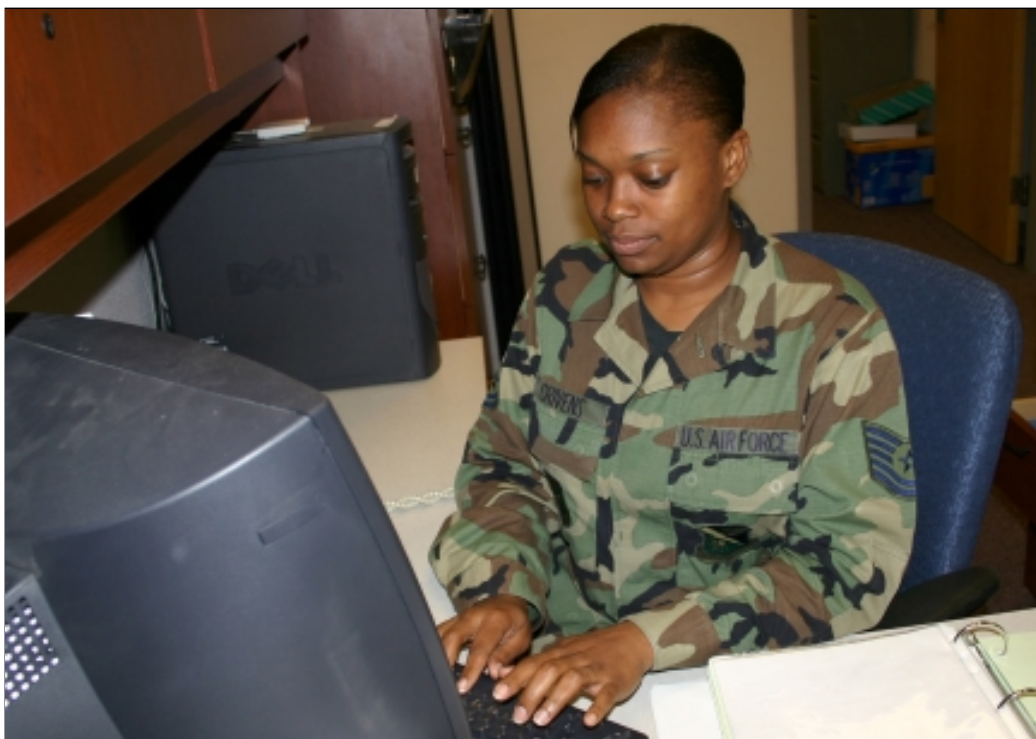


Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi

Finances, deployment: success depends on planning

By Senior Airman Eydie Sakura
52nd Fighter Wing public affairs

SPANGDAHLEM AIR BASE, Germany -- Get ready early. This is the common theme among base agencies that assist Airmen preparing for deployment.

The preparation can be stressful, time consuming and exciting, but above all, requires planning and thinking ahead to the future.

Oftentimes, the focus of deployment is on taking care of the families of the active-duty Airman who is deployed, or ensuring families left behind know they are part of the team too.

But what about those single Airmen who deploy and do not have someone to keep the home campfires burning, but at the same must time prevent financial affairs from going up in smoke?

"Married people normally have someone who stays behind and pays the bills and keeps (the deployed Airman's) affairs in order," said Bill Triplett, a 52nd Mission Support Squadron base financial counselor.

"Single Airmen are more than likely on their own and must prepare well ahead of time."

Single Airmen should do a little research and planning to ensure their financial life will continue to evolve while they are away, Mr. Triplett said. He offers the following tips:

Paying bills:

--Pay monthly bills automatically or online.

--Deferred payments and reduced interest rates are available on the Military Star Card for Airmen with good credit. Go to www.aafes.com and click on the deployment link for further details.

--To obtain deferment for club card dues, take a copy of your orders to the cashiers' cage at the club.

--Turn off phone service during the duration of deployment. It could be cheaper to pay the re-activation fee than the cumulated monthly charges.

Savings:

--The Savings Deposit Plan allows you to deposit up to \$10,000 and earn 10 percent interest annually. Contact your deployed location

finance center to enroll in the plan, or visit www.dod.mil/news/dec2001 for more information.

Thrift Savings Plan:

--You can allocate your combat pay, which is a special pay or incentive pay, into your account. Visit www.tsp.gov for more information.

Accessing money downrange:

--Do not rely primarily on debit cards while deployed. Some locations do not give cash back because of the limited amount of U.S. currency available. Bring a book of checks. Doing so allows you to get cash back through the base finance office.

Even with all the planning and services available on base, a minor oversight that can affect a single Airman's finances can come down to something as simple as the telephone service.

"If you have a roommate, and the telephone is under your name, I suggest turning it off," Mr. Triplett said. "Turn it off and have the roommate set up (his or her) own account, because you as the owner of the telephone service will be responsible for the bills and repay-

ment for all usage-- even while you're away."

Relying too heavily on a friend or peer to handle finances can be detrimental, rather than helpful, if in the wrong hands. That is why Tech. Sgt. Diane Caldwell, a civil law paralegal with the 52nd Fighter Wing's legal office, stresses the importance of choosing a power of attorney wisely and knowing the consequences.

"A power of attorney is a written instrument that allows you to authorize your agent, or attorney-in-fact, to conduct certain business on your behalf," Sergeant Caldwell said. "It is one of the strongest legal documents that you can give to another person, and as such, should not be taken lightly."

It is important for servicemembers to have a power of attorney if they want someone other than themselves to conduct business in their absence.

More information on financial management is available at local family support centers.

(Courtesy of U.S. Air Forces in Europe News Service)

Fitness Center dedication to honor local hero

Courtesy photo

By 1st Lt.
Sheila N. Johnston
Public Affairs

Laughlin will honor a local hero Thursday as it dedicates the base fitness center to Airman 1st Class Raymond Losano at 9 a.m. in a ceremony in front of the center.

Serving as a terminal air control party (TACP), Airman Losano was working alongside Private 1st Class Jerod Dennis during a deployment to Afghanistan with the Army's 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment when they were ambushed and killed April 25, 2003, near Shkin firebase.

"To become a TACP, one must go through intense and rigorous training," said Capt. Brad Dyer, Airman Losano's commander at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., who is now assigned to the 85th Flying Training Squadron. "Even upon graduation, only the best of the best are assigned to Pope AFB. Ray was a part of that 'best of the best'

because he was not only a TACP, he was also a parachutist supporting the Army's elite 82nd Airborne Division."

Airman Losano served as a tactical air command and control specialist assigned to the 14th Air Support Operation Squadron at Pope AFB, N.C.

Airman Losano, a native Del Rioan, moved to Tucson, Ariz., as a teen where he served his community through work with youth and the elderly. He was recognized by the FBI and League of United Latin American Citizens for his volunteering.

While in Tucson, he also received his General Education Diploma and attended Pima Community College where he met his wife Sarah.

They married June 28, 2000 and moved to Redding, Calif. They weren't there long before Airman Losano's desire to serve and reaction to the Sept. 11th attacks landed him in the Air Force. Airman Losano enlisted Nov. 13, 2001, and after

months of basic training, volunteering to become a forward air controller and training for the tactical job, Airman Losano and his wife Sarah moved to North Carolina in June 2002 with their daughter Alorah.

In March 2003, as Airman Losano departed Pope AFB for Afghanistan, Sarah was pregnant with their second daughter Lillian.

April 25, 2003, just five days after his 24th birthday, during a ground operation along the Afghan-Pakistani border, non-military forces ambushed the 504th. While the unit was under heavy fire, Airman Losano received severe wounds. Although he would not make it out of the firefight himself, with his last breath he called in close-air support that saved the rest of the company.

For his acts of bravery, Airman Losano was posthumously awarded a Bronze Star with "V" device for Valor and a Purple Heart.

"He died a hero in every sense of the word," Sarah told the Tucson Citizen in April 2003, "I'm so proud of him and what he did for all of us. I've never been so proud in my



Airman 1st Class Raymond Losano

life. His girls will know what he did and why Daddy's gone."

Airman Losano was interred at Arlington National Cemetery May 14, 2003.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Amber Whittington

Many members of the 14th Air Support Operations Squadron at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., attended Airman 1st Class Raymond Losano's funeral at Arlington National Cemetery May 14, 2003. Airman Losano, 24, was killed April 25, 2003, during a firefight in Afghanistan near the Pakistan border. He was a tactical air command and control specialist assigned to the 14th Air Support Operation Squadron at Pope Air Force Base, N.C.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. R. Steve Milligan

Laughlin's fitness center will be dedicated in memory of Airman 1st Class Raymond Losano, a Del Rioan who was killed in ground-combat operations while serving in Afghanistan. The ceremony is set for 9 a.m. Thursday in front of the center. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the fitness center gymnasium. Base members are reminded the fitness center will be closed from 9 to 10:30 a.m. for the ceremony.

There's always a better way in times of financial need

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. -- The Airman had \$600 left until payday, which was fine-- until her car broke down, and with it, a \$1,000 repair bill.

Two "friends" offered to help her out. The first offered an interest-free loan of \$500. The second offered a \$500 loan for a \$75 fee, and said if the Airman could not pay the money back in two weeks, additional fees would be charged. Many might think borrowing money from the Air Force Aid Society is the obvious solution. But Airmen are still using payday loans to help them get by in tight financial situations when they could be getting help from their own organization --the Air Force.

"When (Airmen) find themselves in a desperate situation where they feel like there's nothing else and no other option, they make the decision to use a payday loan," said Gayle Brinkley, community readiness policy analyst for Air Combat Command's directorate of personnel family matters branch.

Yet, for others, the use of these high-interest loans is attractive because of a fear of repercussions from their supervisors.

"I was an Airman, and I didn't want to get in trouble," said Staff Sgt. Darnell Cox, a munitions technician

with the 1st Equipment Maintenance Squadron here. Sergeant Cox said he knew he was not necessarily being financially responsible, but he did not want others to know his business.

Sergeant Cox said he started using payday loans several years ago as an Airman after he saw a television commercial for a local payday loan lender. He did an Internet search on the nearest location and was on his way to the first of more than 40 payday loans over the next two years.

Although he paid his loans on time, Sergeant Cox said he regrets using them because of the high fees or interest rates, which can range from 391 percent to 1,300 percent annually.

"In the course of a year, I wasted \$1,800 in fees alone," Sergeant Cox said. "It's money I could've saved instead of giving away."

"(The loans are) designed to keep you coming back," the sergeant said. "You figure you go over there a couple of times and you'll be good to go, but you can never make it past the loan."

Ms. Brinkley said that, like Sergeant Cox, many Airmen may plan to pay off the loan with their next paycheck; however, other expenses often arise. It happens all the time, and then it becomes a cycle until all of a sud-

den it is out of control.

Susie Markel, a family support center community readiness consultant, recalls a noncommissioned officer who came to the center with 10 outstanding payday loans.

"He was paying \$565 every two weeks just to keep them off his back and ended up filing for bankruptcy," she said.

Not only can out-of-control payday loans damage credit, they can also damage Air Force careers, she said. Financial irresponsibility can cost an Airman anything from a letter of counseling, an Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice action, or in severe cases, a discharge from the Air Force.

After about a year's worth of payday loans, then-Airman Cox decided to get help from the family support center. There, he qualified for an interest-free AFAS loan that helped him cover living expenses such as mortgage payments, rent, car repairs, utilities and phone bills while he repaid the payday loans. The center even helped him develop a budget.

"They worked magic; I don't know how they did it," he said.

Like Sergeant Cox, many servicemembers may think if they borrow money from AFAS, it will get back

to the first sergeant or commander, and that is not necessarily true, Ms. Markel said.

Although there may be times when circumstances require the center to inform the first sergeant or commander, AFAS loans are handled on a case-by-case basis, and the center encourages Airmen to seek assistance if they need it.

"They think it's a bad thing that they had to reach out for help," she said.

Although he is on solid financial ground now, Sergeant Cox said looking back, he wishes he would have asked for help sooner instead of worrying about getting in trouble. By getting help, he would have actually had one less thing to worry about.

"If I didn't get help, I'd probably still be stressed out about how I'm going to pay this or how I'm going to pay that," he said. "I'd be in a worse situation than I was."

Sergeant Cox said whether people get help from the family support center or a financial institution that offers a low-interest consolidation loan, there are alternatives to payday loans.

"There's always a better way," he said.

(Courtesy of ACC News Service)

Kirtland Airman hits jackpot

By Capt. Morgan O'Brien
377th Air Base Wing
public affairs

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N. --A master sergeant here got a whole lot more than milk during a recent trip to the supermarket.

In fact, Master Sgt. John San Cartier, a special operations loadmaster instructor with the 58th Training Squadron, "got" a lottery ticket that ended up winning the \$93.4 million jackpot.

The 15-year Air Force veteran purchased the winning ticket Aug. 9 after making an emergency trip to the supermarket to purchase a gallon of milk.

The occasional lottery player saw the winning jackpot amount and decided to

purchase 10 quick-pick tickets where the numbers were randomly generated.

On his way to work the next morning, Sergeant San Cartier heard on the radio that the winner was from New Mexico and thought to himself, "Wouldn't that be something if I went to work and didn't know I was a millionaire all day?"

After work, he checked, and rechecked, and triple-checked his numbers against those posted on the Web, running through a variety of sites in disbelief before finally calling his wife to verify the numbers.

Finally, he stored the numbers in a safety deposit box, which is a standard recommendation for future lottery winners. At that point, it was

time to get his affairs in order.

The ensuing weeks saw Sergeant San Cartier meeting with financial and legal advisers to plan his future. Sergeant San Cartier chose to take a lump sum of \$52.2 million, rather than spread the payments out in annual installments. According to lottery officials, after taxes, he will receive a one-time wire transfer of about \$36 million.

This windfall has presented the sergeant with many choices. For the time being, Sergeant San Cartier is keeping his options open.

"The Air Force has been very good to me and my family," said the father of two. "I've had an exciting career and been to places that I never would have if I hadn't joined."

"He's a hard worker, a



Courtesy photo

Master Sgt. John San Cartier holds his winning lottery check for \$93.4 million.

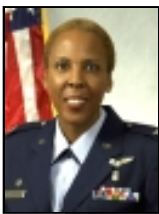
dedicated worker," said Lt. Col. Tom Marocchini, 58th TRS commander. "It couldn't happen to a nicer guy. He is liked by everyone. ... We have a great team and everyone was excited to see one of our own win big."

Sergeant San Cartier, 33, joined the Air Force in 1989 after graduating high school. Recently, he focused his career on becoming a chief mas-

ter sergeant.

"This money has been a great opportunity for my family and me, opening many doors for us. Ultimately, we will do what's in the best interest of ourselves and the Air Force," he said.

The prize is the second largest in New Mexico history and the largest claimed by a single person.



What's up Doc?

By Col. Laura Torres-Reyes
47th Medical Group commander

Question: About six weeks ago, I had an appointment with a doctor at your clinic. He stated that he would put in a referral for me to go to Wilford Hall. I waited for something to happen. I thought I should receive something in the mail or a phone call. After four weeks, I still didn't receive anything. I called WHMC and Tricare, and they had nothing in the system. I called the clinic and found out he forgot to put it in. I was told they would take care of it, and that I should check back in a couple of days to make sure.

A week later, I called WHMC and Tricare, and they had nothing. I'm fed up!

Why do I have to go through this?

I feel this whole system is wrong. My hus-

band served 24 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, and we deserve medical attention. I should not have to drive 150 miles to see a dermatologist or any doctor for that matter.

Answer: I am truly sorry that you've had such a frustrating experience with our consult-referral process. There is no question we made a mistake and that you deserve better service. We are aggressively tackling problems with the consult-referral process that was mandated by the new Tricare contract. Our consult referrals are screened in house, and a determination is made if the local off-base healthcare network can handle the appointment or if it needs to go to Wilford Hall or Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio. Those referrals needing to go to San Antonio military treatment facilities are sent to the Consolidated Appointment Management Office (CAMO) in San Antonio. These consults are reviewed, routed and appointed, directly from the CAMO, often with no coordination with the patient.

In an attempt to obtain visibility of, and to track the consults sent from our clinic monthly, we have assigned a technician to personally contact the CAMO and track the progress of consults. Unfor-

tunately, our system does not function properly, as in your case, when the provider forgets to perform the data entry of requesting the consult.

The good news is that every section has a customer-service advocate who can readily investigate any problems and ensure prompt resolution of issues. All you have to do is request to speak to the customer-service advocate of the area you are receiving care. I wish I could guarantee that you will never need to travel six hours round trip to see a medical consultant. The reality, as you know, is we have to constantly face the challenge of living in a clinically-underserved area where there are few medical specialties available.

My only guarantee is that we are doing everything possible to ensure your future consult referrals to the San Antonio area are as hassle free and customer friendly as possible. Again, my sincere apologies, and thank you for your feedback.

Thanks for your question!

You may contact Colonel Torres-Reyes at laura.torres-reyes@laughlin.af.mil if you have a What's Up Doc? question.

Falcon football kicks off at 'home' in Seattle

By Tech. Sgt.
Don Nelson
Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO -- Air Force Falcons will kickoff their season as the "home" team 1,400 miles away from Falcon Stadium in Colorado Springs, Colo. The Falcons begin their 2005 campaign against the University of Washington at Qwest Field in Seattle on Sept. 3.

The season opener also will feature several demonstrations and events that highlight the Air Force.

The activities include a free tailgate party, a pregame flyover, presentation of the colors by the McChord Air Force Base, Wash., honor guard and the singing of the national anthem by the Air Force academy band's Blue Steel.

Halftime festivities will feature an enlistment ceremony and a live performance by the Falcon mascot. Following the game, Blue

Steel will perform a 30-minute concert in the south end zone.

Coming off a 5-6 record last season, the Falcons are looking to get back on track this season, Air Force head coach Fisher Deberry said.

"I can't wait to get back on the field," DeBerry said. "Our strength staff has done a good job of bringing out the athleticism of our players in the off-season, and now we need to get them on the field and develop it with practice."

The Falcons have five games at Falcon Stadium this season with the opener Sept. 10 against San Diego State University to begin Mountain West Conference play. Other home games include University of Wyoming on Sept. 17, University of Nevada-Las Vegas on Oct. 15, Texas Christian University on Oct. 22, and Army on Nov. 5.

Air Force will hit the road for three games in a row

beginning Sept. 22 against the University of Utah. The Falcons go to Fort Collins, Colo., on Sept. 29 to play Colorado State University and then to Annapolis, Md., to take on Navy.

The road schedule concludes with a game at Brigham Young University on Oct. 29 and at University of New Mexico on Nov. 19.

Offensively, the Falcons were solid last season finishing second in the conference in scoring and total offense. DeBerry said the team looks to improve on last year.

"I think our defense is going to be considerably better this season. I like what we're doing with the defense and I think we have a lot of guys that can help us," he said.

If history repeats itself, they will bounce back. Following each of Air Force's other two losing seasons under DeBerry, the team won eight games the next year.

Lieutenant selected for World Class Athlete Program

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. -- Former Air Force pole vault standout 2nd Lt. Paul Gensic was recently accepted to the U.S. Air Force World Class Athlete Program.

The program gives high-caliber athletes, both officers and enlisted, the opportunity to continue training in their sport, while preparing for a berth in the Olympic Games.

A 2005 graduate of the academy, Lieutenant Gensic was a three-time All-American and named the academy's most valuable male athlete as a senior. The Fort Wayne, Ind., native holds the pole vault record here, clearing a career-best 18 feet, 1/2 inches during the indoor and outdoor seasons. Lieutenant Gensic spent most of his collegiate career ranked among the nation's elite, highlighted by a third-place finish at the 2005

NCAA Indoor Championships.

"This is a huge honor for Paul and for our program," said Air Force head coach Ralph Lindeman. "For the next three years, he'll be able to dedicate himself full time to reaching new heights in the pole vault."

"The Air Force's WCAP ... is normally a two-year program leading up to each Olympic Games, so for Paul to enter the program a year early carries with it added responsibilities," Mr. Lindeman said. "He'll be expected to continue to improve and represent the Air Force in major competitions nationwide, as well as the United States in international competitions."

Besides training here with his former teammates, Lieutenant Gensic will be a volunteer coach and administrative assistant with the Air Force track and field program.